

OPS-2 LD

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CITE FBIS/LONDON 10471

TO: FBIS.

SUBJECT: LONDON BUREAU WORKLOAD ISSUE

REF: A. FBIS 28806  
B. FBIS 28790  
C. FBIS/LONDON 10418

CC:C/MOD  
C/DRD

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1. AFTER EXTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS ON THE WORKLOAD ISSUE, WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THREE MAIN PRIORITIES: A) IMPROVED RESPONSIVENESS TO FBIS CONSUMER REQUIREMENTS BY REVIEWING REQUIREMENTS TO ENSURE WE ARE NOT SACRIFICING REAL CONSUMER NEEDS TO OUTDATED MANDATORY TEXTING AND OTHER SELECTION AND PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS; B) FULL EXPLOITATION OF THE BBC PRODUCT; C) REALLOCATION OF PMU WORKLOAD AND REORGANIZATION OF BUREAU EDITORIAL OPERATIONS TO SOMETHING MORE MANAGEABLE THAN CURRENTLY EXISTS.

2. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THESE GOALS CAN BE MET (AT LEAST PARTIALLY) IN THREE WAYS: A) IDENTIFICATION OF WAYS TO RATIONALIZE REQUIREMENTS; B) REDUCTION OF PMU WORKLOAD BY IDENTIFYING A PACKAGE OF COVERAGE WHICH CAN BE PASSED TO UD; C) REORGANIZATION OF THE EDITORIAL OPERATION AND ADDITIONAL EDITORIAL RESOURCES AND SPACE.

3. CHIEF/PMU AND CHIEF EDITOR ARE ADDRESSING THE FIRST PROPOSAL IN SEPARATE MESSAGES AND CHIEF/PMU HAS PARTIALLY ADDRESSED REALLOCATION OF PMU COVERAGE IN REF C. MUST NOTE HERE THAT THESE PROPOSALS ALONE WILL NOT BE THE ANSWER TO THE WORKLOAD ISSUE. THERE IS SUCH A GLUT OF FILEWORTHY INFORMATION AT THIS POINT THAT ANY RELIEF BROUGHT ABOUT BY, FOR EXAMPLE, A REDUCTION IN MANDATORY TEXTING REQUIREMENTS, WOULD QUICKLY BE WIPED OUT BY THE OFTEN MORE INTERESTING NON-MANDATORY MATERIAL. THEREFORE, WHILE THESE MEASURES MAY PARTIALLY MEET

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 OUR FIRST TWO PRIORITIES, THEY ARE NOT GOING TO PROVIDE REAL RELIEF TO OUR STAFF. WE ARE FORCED TO CONCLUSION THAT WE DO NEED EXTRA EDITORIAL RESOURCES TO MORE FULLY MEET ALL THREE GOALS LISTED IN FIRST GRAF.

4. TO EXPAND ON PROPOSAL C, WE RECOMMEND A REORGANIZATION OF THE EDITORIAL OPERATION BY DIVIDING IT INTO THREE SLOTS (SOVIET, EUROPE AND OTHER). THE "OTHER" OPERATION, WHICH WOULD CONSIST OF TWO EDITORS ON DAY AND EVENING SHIFT, WOULD BE MOVED OUT OF THE EDITORIAL ROOM TO AN ADJACENT OFFICE (EITHER THE C/COMM CENTER OFFICE OR THE CHIEF EDITOR'S OFFICE WITH ONE OF THESE OFFICERS BEING MOVED TO A YET-TO-BE-IDENTIFIED SPACE NEARBY. MORE ON THIS LATER). THE SOVIET AND EUROPE OPERATIONS WOULD REMAIN IN THE EXISTING EDITORIAL SPACE. TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE WE WOULD DIVIDE THE EDITORIAL STAFF INTO SPECIALIST TEAMS WHO WOULD WORK REGULARLY ON ONE SPECIFIC AREA FOR A SPECIFIED AMOUNT OF TIME, THUS BUILDING UP SOME AREA EXPERTISE. WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD RESULT IN IMPROVED SERVICE TO THE CONSUMER BY MORE INFORMED SELECTION AND EDITORIAL FAMILIARITY WITH A SPECIFIC AREA. GIVING EDITORS A CHANGE TO TEMPORARILY SPECIALIZE INSTEAD OF ATTEMPTING TO DEAL WITH THE ENTIRE HIGHLY COMPLEX LONDON COVERAGE AREA WOULD HELP EDITORIAL MORALE AND REMOVE ONE OF THE MORE FREQUENT CAUSES FOR COMPLAINT ABOUT THE LONDON DESK JOB.

5. TO IMPLEMENT THE ABOVE, WE WOULD HAVE TO ELIMINATE THE MWR AND ABSORB THESE POSITIONS INTO THE EDITORIAL OPERATION. IF   ELECTS TO STAY WE WOULD ASSIGN HIM PERMANENTLY TO THE "OTHER" OPERATION WHERE HIS MOSLEM WORD EXPERTISE WOULD GREATLY RATIONALIZE SELECTION. IN ADDITION TO THE TWO MWR BODIES, WE WOULD NEED TO INCREASE THE EDITORIAL T/O BY AT LEAST ONE MORE EDITOR TO ADEQUATELY STAFF ALL SHIFTS AND COVER FOR SICK/ANNUAL LEAVE.

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6. SOME JUSTIFICATION FOR THE INCREASED EDITORIAL T/O WOULD INCLUDE FACT THAT NOT ONLY HAS ANNUAL FILED EDITORIAL WORDAGE INCREASED BY 5.5 MILLION SINCE 1984, BUT THE AMOUNT OF COPY AND SUBSEQUENTLY THE DISCARD RATE HAS ALSO RISEN DRAMATICALLY. ON MANY DAYS WE ARE FORCED TO DISCARD LARGE AMOUNTS OF FILEWORTHY ROUTINE MATERIAL JUST TO KEEP UP WITH THE

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PRIORITY AND ABOVE ITEMS. WE ARE THUS NOT GETTING OUR FULL  
MONEY'S WORTH OUT OF THE BBC WHICH, UNLIKE LONDON BUREAU, HAS  
EXPANDED SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE YEARS. ACCORDING TO OUR  
RECORDS, EDITORIAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN INCREASED BY 1.5  
ASSOCIATE EDITORS SINCE 1984 AND THIS IS SIMPLY NOT ENOUGH TO  
KEEP UP WITH THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE.

7. WE REALIZE THAT RESOURCES ARE VERY TIGHT AND THAT THIS  
PROPOSAL MAY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO IMPLEMENT AT PRESENT.  
UNFORTUNATELY WE CANNOT CREATE A SECOND UNIT WITHOUT AN  
ADDITIONAL EDITOR, AND EVEN THEN IT WILL BE TIGHT DURING HEAVY  
LEAVE PERIODS. WE BELIEVE THAT JUST THROWING MORE RESOURCES  
INTO THE EDITORIAL ROOM, WITH ITS LACK OF SPACE AND  
OVER-EXTENDED COVERAGE AREA, WOULD PROVIDE LITTLE RELIEF FOR  
EDITORS AND NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE QUALITY OF  
SELECTION/EDITING. IT WOULD, HOWEVER, STILL BE BETTER THAN  
NOTHING AND WE WOULD PREFER TO PROCEED WITH PLAN TO ELIMINATE  
MWR AND USE THE RESOURCES ON THE EDITORIAL DESK EVEN IF ANOTHER  
EDITOR IS NOT IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE.

8. FILE: NONE. DECL OADR DRV COV 1-82.  
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